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Press: Questions and Answers

Q: Could you discuss why you came to Åre and the significance of this meeting? What exactly is the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council? Why is it meeting in Sweden this year? What did the meeting accomplish?

A: THE EAPC IS ALL ABOUT PARTNERSHIP, AND HOW WE CAN ALL WORK TOGETHER TO PROMOTE FREEDOM, DEMOCRACY, AND SECURITY.

- **THIS MEETING WAS UNIQUE, AS IT INCLUDED GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, CIVIL SOCIETY REPRESENTATIVES, AND MEMBERS OF THE MEDIA.**
- **TOGETHER WE DISCUSSED HOW WE CAN IMPROVE NATO'S COOPERATION WITH ITS PARTNERS ON A WIDE RANGE OF ISSUES, FROM THE BALKANS TO THE MIDDLE EAST.**
- **THIS IS THE INAUGURAL EAPC SECURITY FORUM AND HIGHLIGHTS THE IMPORTANCE NATO PLACES ON ITS PARTNER RELATIONSHIPS.**
- **BY MEETING IN SWEDEN, WE ARE EMPHASIZING THE LEADERSHIP ROLE THAT SWEDEN PLAYS AMONG OUR PARTNERS – WITH FORCES IN KOSOVO AND AFGHANISTAN.**

Q: There has been a continuing controversy over the rendition of two Egyptian citizens from Sweden to Egypt in December 2001 and the U.S.

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Government role. Could you explain what the involvement of the United States was and why your government was involved?

A: WE CANNOT COMMENT ON INTELLIGENCE MATTERS.

Q: There has been a long debate in Sweden about NATO membership? What is your view? Would the United States like to see Sweden become a NATO member?

A: SWEDEN, OF COURSE, WOULD BE A VALUED ALLY IF IT CHOSE TO JOIN NATO BECAUSE OF ITS ACTIVE INTERNATIONAL ENGAGEMENT AND COMMITMENT TO THE SHARED VALUES OF THE ALLIANCE.

- **BUT ULTIMATELY THE QUESTION OF APPLYING TO BECOME PART OF THE ALLIANCE IS UP TO SWEDEN.**

Q: Some in Sweden have questioned NATO's commitment to democracy. Why are dictatorships such as Belarus and Uzbekistan, for instance, welcomed as members of the NATO Partnership for Peace?

A: THE PARTNERSHIP FOR PEACE ESTABLISHES A REAL DIALOGUE BETWEEN NATO AND EACH PARTICIPANT.

- **JOINT ACTIVITIES AND REGULAR CONSULTATION HELP TO SHARE NATO'S VALUES SUCH AS CIVILIAN CONTROL OF THE MILITARY AND TRANSPARENT DEFENSE PLANNING. FURTHERING THESE**

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**DEMOCRATIC VALUES IS AT THE HEART OF THE
PARTNERSHIP FOR PEACE.**

Q: What is your view of discussion about Europe becoming a counterweight to America?

A: **A STRONG EUROPE WILL ENHANCE EXISTING U.S.-
EUROPEAN COOPERATION.**

- **OCCASIONAL DISAGREEMENTS DO NOT DIMINISH
THE CORE IMPORTANCE OF OUR TRANSATLANTIC
RELATIONSHIP WITH EUROPE AND OF NATO AS OUR
PRINCIPAL FORUM FOR TRANSATLANTIC
STRATEGIC DISCUSSIONS.**

Q: How do you respond to charges that the United States in connection with Iraq and the war on terrorism has been unilateral and has rejected multi-lateralism?

A: **PRESIDENT BUSH AND SECRETARY RICE HAVE
EMPHASIZED REPEATEDLY OUR COMMITMENT TO
EFFECTIVE MULTILATERALISM.**

- **THE U.S. COMMITMENT TO WORKING WITHIN NATO
HAS NEVER BEEN CLEARER.**
- **THE U.S. REMAINS DEDICATED TO WORKING WITH
OUR ALLIES AND PARTNERS ALIKE TO KEEP NATO
AT THE CENTER OF THE EFFORT TO BUILD A
DEMOCRATIC, FREE, AND SECURE WORLD IN THE
YEARS AHEAD.**

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